



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

County of Los Angeles
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August 24, 2004

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**RESPONSE TO THE FINAL REPORT OF THE 2003-2004
LOS ANGELES COUNTY GRAND JURY**

Attached is the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's response to the 2003-2004 Grand Jury Report's recommendations. The areas of interest to the Grand Jury include gang injunctions and law enforcement.

Should you have questions regarding our response, please contact Commander Roberta Abner, of my office, at (323) 526-5000.

Sincerely,

LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF

A Tradition of Service

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

2003-2004 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GANG INJUNCTIONS

RECOMMENDATION NO.1: **LAPD and LASD should continue and enhance efforts to improve the quality and consistency of the definition and reporting of gang crimes.**

RESPONSE:

As part of the Los Angeles Regional Gang Information Network (LARGIN), both LAPD and LASD, as well as most municipal agencies within Los Angeles County, have agreed to a uniform definition of gang crime (Attachment). LARGIN is a new program in which all law enforcement agencies within the County input gang crime into a common database to assist investigators targeting violent gang crimes. It also enables managers to effectively deploy resources. It was recognized early in the process that in order to be effective, a common definition of gang crime must be utilized by all involved agencies.

There is still subjectivity in identifying a crime as gang related, but the subjectivity is based on investigators' expertise within their own jurisdiction. For example, an investigator may be assigned a case without any suspect information, but may classify the crime as gang related due to the type of crime, location of the crime, or crime patterns within that community.

LARGIN, while still in its formative stages, will eventually be the system to address this recommendation. With comprehensive input from agencies throughout Los Angeles County, a significant benefit will be accurate, consistent statistical reporting of gang crimes.

RECOMMENDATION 2: **Law enforcement agencies should exploit best practices in data processing to support their management and analysis of gang suppression and intervention outcomes.**

RESPONSE:

Until recently, LASD has been the only agency utilizing the case management side of the CalGang system. While other Department systems are not capable of distinguishing between gang related and non-gang related crimes, CalGang is devoted solely to gang crimes and is an accurate system for tracking the most significant gang

crimes. With the advent of LARGIN, all law enforcement agencies who have agreed to participate will input crime information into CalGang.

While LARGIN is designed as an analytical tool for investigators, accurate statistical information on gang crime is a collateral benefit. Funding for LARGIN has been secured through the next fiscal year. At the current level of funding, four crime analysts are funded. Their responsibilities include assisting investigators on cases and link analysis. Management can also utilize the analysts to identify problem areas, redeploy assets, and evaluate the effectiveness of those redeployments.

RECOMMENDATION #3: LAPD, LASD, City Attorney's Office and County District Attorney's Office should continue to expand the use of CGIs in their ongoing collaboration to suppress gang crime and intervene in gang activities.

RESPONSE:

While recognizing the value of Civil Gang Injunctions (CGI), the Grand Jury Final Report has also cited the lengthy, labor intensive process of obtaining them. Six months is not an unusual time frame for completion of a CGI, which can be extended dependent upon the size of area included and the number of targeted gang members.

The Sheriff's Department believes in the value of CGIs and is working with the District Attorney's Office on a new CGI that would impact the Lennox area. That CGI is nearing completion and another effort to accumulate supporting documentation for a CGI in Century Station's jurisdiction is underway.

The concept of employing CGIs that target shared gangs, or gangs that impact adjoining jurisdictions is enticing. The District Attorney and City Attorney have worked on CGIs impacting the same gang in neighboring jurisdictions. This effort minimizes the potential for this specific gang to move across jurisdictional boundaries as a way of circumventing the edicts of the injunction. While utilizing two injunctions, the net effect is one injunction covering a large geographic area covering parts of two policing jurisdictions.

RECOMMENDATION #4: Deputy Probation officers (DPOs) should be assigned to each LAPD Gang Impact Team and each LASD Gang Investigation Unit.

RESPONSE:

The Sheriff's Department concurs that the Probation Department is a valuable partner in the battle against gang crime. Currently, LASD participates in a Parole/Probation Task Force designed to enhance our ability to conduct probation searches. Two DPOs are assigned to this unit and work closely with many of the gang investigative units at LASD Stations.

In addition to the Parole/Probation Task Force, many of our investigative teams have established relationships with DPOs in local offices that benefit both agencies. Frequently, LASD investigators are dependent on DPOs for their expertise and access to current conditions of probation information. Just as frequently, DPOs will request the assistance of LASD personnel when they encounter a situation that requires the presence of uniformed law enforcement or additional personnel assets. This mutual collaboration has been effective and would only be enhanced by assigning DPOs to individual stations. "Ownership" on the part of both DPOs and Deputy personnel will enhance cooperation and efficiency in our mutual goal of reducing gang violence.

ATTACHMENT

GANG CRIME DEFINITION

The LARGIN committee has agreed that the following definition will be used to define a "Gang Related Crime" for the purposes of LARGIN participation.

Any crime can constitute a gang related crime when the suspect or victim is an active or affiliated gang member, or when circumstances indicate that the crime is consistent with gang activity.

Determining if a crime is gang related is subjective in nature and is a result of a totality of the circumstances. Classification cannot be accomplished accurately without a high degree of gang expertise or validation through the CalGang system. One or more of the following gang related criteria shall be used to justify that a crime is gang related.

- The suspect or victim is a known gang member previously entered into the CalGang System.
- The suspect or victim is a known gang member and/or affiliated.
- The suspect or victim has a gang tattoo.
- The suspect or victim has a gang moniker.
- A statement indicating gang involvement.
- The suspect or victim was "dressed down" or wearing gang colors or clothing.
- The suspect or victim was demonstrating gang behavior. (Using gang hand signs).
- Multiple suspects and gang modus operandi were involved.
- The location of the crime was within identified gang boundaries, or at a known gang location.
- Similar reports were made where the suspects were identified as gang members.
- The type and/or modus operandi of the crime is inherently gang related.
- When a reliable informant identifies a crime as gang related.
- When an informant of previously untested reliability identifies a crime as gang related and it is corroborated by other independent information.

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

2003-2004 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

RECOMMENDATION # 1:

The Sheriff should achieve the 35% - 65% (Custody Assistant to Deputy) ratio in the jails, which would achieve a savings of \$3.9 million.

RESPONSE:

Budgetary limitations incurred in the last few years have severely reduced the hiring of Custody Assistants. The Department continues to work to meet these staffing goals.

RECOMMENDATION # 2:

The Sheriff should aggressively move from the 35% - 65% ratio to a 50% - 50% ratio (equal numbers of Custody Assistants and Deputies) in the jails by FY 2008 - 2009 with an annual savings of \$18.1 million.

RESPONSE:

The two biggest hurdles to overcome to meet this goal are future budget decisions and current MOU union agreements.

RECOMMENDATION # 3:

The Sheriff should use 57 Custody Assistants in the courts, resulting in a savings of at least \$2.3 million.

RESPONSE:

The Department will continue to explore the use of Custody Assistants in the courts.

RECOMMENDATION # 4:

The Sheriff should assess and increase the number of Custody Assistants beyond 57 in the courts and explore the potential use of civilians in transporting inmates to court.

RESPONSE:

With regard to increasing the use of Custody Assistants in the courts, the Department will continue to explore this recommendation.

With regard to "exploring the potential use of civilians in transporting inmates to court," there are two significant issues to address. The first issue is the safety of the inmates and Department employees. The use of civilians might appear to be cost effective; however, even though the inmates are picked up and dropped off in secure areas of the jails, where they are waist-chained and/or handcuffed, the potential for escapes and injury to personnel and other inmates should the bus have to stop in transit (i.e., mechanical break-down, heavy traffic) is greatly reduced with two armed deputies present as opposed to two unarmed civilians. The second issue is the large number of inmates that are transported throughout the county on a daily basis. The Department's buses can accommodate 49 inmates. The sheer volume of inmates could create a significant safety issue for two unarmed civilians.

RECOMMENDATION # 5:

Custody Assistants' duties should be clearly defined in operational terms.

RESPONSE:

The Department agrees with this recommendation and will continue to work to ensure that job responsibilities are clearly understood by the employee.

RECOMMENDATION # 6:

The Sheriff should seek out candidates for Custody Assistant positions who are interested in a career with the Sheriff's Department.

RESPONSE:

The Department actively encourages all persons qualified to apply for positions within the Sheriff's Department to submit an application. Hiring qualified persons is always a priority in the Department; however, recent budgetary constraints have severely reduced *any* hiring.

RECOMMENDATION # 7:

In addition to existing internal promotional opportunities, consideration should be given to developing a "career path" for Custody Assistants.

RESPONSE:

The Department is open to the possibility of a "career path" for Custody Assistants. The creation of such a "path" would require restructuring of the current jail system, renegotiation of existing MOU union agreements, several years to implement, and could significantly reduce any cost savings achieved by increasing the use of Custody Assistants.

RECOMMENDATION # 8:

As Custody Assistants develop a consistent professional approach to their jobs, the Sheriff can initiate other changes that would complement, support, and encourage this change.

RESPONSE:

The Department is always interested in ideas that would improve an employee's job performance and experience.

RECOMMENDATION # 9:

New Deputy Sheriffs should be assigned to patrol duties after completing approximately two years of service in custody operations.

RESPONSE:

The Department agrees with this recommendation. Recent budgetary constraints have severely reduced transfers of deputies from custody operations to patrol stations. These constraints have caused staffing shortages throughout the Department. The Department continues to work toward reducing the length of time deputies stay in custody.